

FREDERICK COUNTY HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

August 30, 2016

MINUTES

I. The meeting was called to order.

II. The following members were present: Mari Lee, Tonya Amedon, David Kaye, Lisa Clark, Francisco Alves, Kavonte' Duckett, Marguerite Vacca-Kaye, Debbie Peeks and Annette Breiling.

Liaison members Jet Reid and Donna Kuzemchak were also present.

III. Other persons present were Roger Sobkowiak, Amanda Fleet, Linda Jones, Jaanai Priest, and Angela Spencer.

IV. All present were invited to stand and recite the Pledge of Allegiance if they wished.

V. The July 2016 HRC meeting minutes were reviewed and approved with one correction. In Section X, the surname for liaison member Jet Reid was incorrectly shown as Wilson. A motion was made to make that correction, and the motion passed.

VI. Members of the public were invited to make comments. Linda Jones and Jaanai Priest each expressed an interest in learning more about what the HRC does, and a willingness to help in any way possible. Former HRC Chair Angela Spencer remarked that she has been following the HRC on Facebook while she has been in Texas recently, knows it has been doing a lot of positive things, and wants to help in any way she can.

VII. It was reported that the HRC has \$4,270 in funds on hand.

VIII. Mari Lee reported that the annual retreat on Saturday had been a great success. At it, she announced that she has made the following committee appointments. Tonya Amedon will chair the Community Relations Committee (CRC), and Francisco Alves and Debbie Peeks will serve on it. The CRC will continue to take the lead on matters involving the Youth Leadership program, in which the HRC partners with the Boys & Girls Club at five middle schools, with assistance provided by members of AmeriCorps. Lisa Clark said that more AmeriCorps members are needed.

The Government Relations Committee (GRC) will be chaired by Kavonte' Duckett, with Marguerite Vacca-Kaye, Adam Book and Felicia Turner serving as members. The GRC is currently planning activities for a combined Legislative Lunch and Human Rights Day event that will take place in December, on a date to be determined. Bullying in the workplace will be the topic.

David Kaye will chair the Internal Relations Committee, with Annette Breiling and Gene Stanton serving as members.

Mari Lee also announced the creation of a new committee, to be called the Major Events Committee. Lisa Clark will chair it, and this committee will be responsible for planning and organizing the HRC's two biggest annual events, the Awards Dinner and the Naturalization Ceremony. This year the Naturalization Ceremony will take place on Saturday, September 17, starting at 11 am at Winchester Hall.

IX. The version of the amended HRC By-Laws that has been circulated and discussed was put forward for adoption. Tonya Amedon made the motion and Lisa Clark seconded it. The motion passed, and the new By-Laws will take effect immediately.

X. There was substantial discussion about the public forum that was held on August 10, 2016 entitled *Community Policing from the Community Perspective*. Many present said that the forum was a great first step and should be done again. Good diversity among the panel members was noted, and a desire for more audience participation was expressed. Others hoped that the publicity and notification for future forums could be improved. Several people expressed the hope that some future forums could be conducted in areas where attendance would be more convenient and community participation could be more direct.

Subjects for forums were discussed, and many agreed that people want to be able to speak with law enforcement leaders about the areas they're concerned about. Public safety and trust are very important topics. David Kaye said the bedrock of what the HRC does should reflect concern for all human rights issues. There should be plenty of discussion, but it should not be limited to law enforcement. Some suggested that the forums should be done frequently, perhaps on a quarterly basis with several dates set in advance to aid in planning. Mari Lee said that she intends to appoint a special committee to deal with forums.

XI. Miles Ward encouraged HRC members to participate in upcoming events, including the Older Adult Volunteer Fair on September 9. Hopefully there will be interest by some attendees to volunteer to help with HRC events and activities. Miles said that the Frederick County Sheriff's Office currently has openings for Deputy Sheriffs. These are lateral hire positions open for currently certified law enforcement officers. The Sheriff's Office notified the HRC and many other community organizations and leaders as part of its efforts to increase diversity.

Barbara Amaya will speak at 11 am on Thursday, September 22 at FCC, on her recently published memoir, *"Nobody's Girl: Lost Innocence, Modern Day Slavery, and Transformation."* Her story starts at the age of 12 when she was forced into the world of human trafficking and chronicles the ten years she spent being sold on the streets of Washington, D.C. and New York City.

Finally, the ACLU of Maryland is presenting "Know Your Rights Training" on September 22 at 6 pm at the Urbana Regional Library. This training will focus on how to safely exercise basic constitutional rights during police encounters and other issues related to policing and communities of color.

XII. Mari Lee asked for approval of payment to PC Creative Group to revise the graphics for the HRC's current logo, reconfigure typography and provide a finished product in multiple formats. This is necessary because the current logo was created years ago and does not print clearly or attractively. The

estimated cost will range from \$150 to \$225. David Kaye moved to approve this payment and Lisa Clark seconded. The motion passed.

Mari Lee said that she intends that the HRC will begin publishing a quarterly newsletter before the end of the year.

Discussion was held about changing the scope of HRC involvement in public events and activities. It has become increasingly obvious that it is unrealistic to expect HRC members to cover all of the public events and activities that come to the HRC's attention. Members expressed their resolve to get the HRC's message out by attending events but not sitting at a table to hand out items. Instead, HRC members would wear their shirts and badges and walk around to talk with people. Not as many events would be covered this way as in past years. The HRC will need to give careful consideration to which events it wants to continue participating in. It was also suggested that a day of service could be set each quarter for HRC members. This would allow members to have more meaningful community interactions.

It was suggested that one example of this change could be the upcoming Frederick Community Health Fair on October 22, 2016 at the County Fairgrounds. Instead of having a table, HRC members could sign up as volunteers with the Asian American Center of Frederick, which is the event's primary sponsor.

Lisa Clark and Tonya Amedon will be coordinating HRC participation in the upcoming In The Street festival on September 10. The HRC has already paid to have a table at that event. A sign-up sheet will be circulated.

Mari Lee said that she is considering shortening the HRC's mission statement to make it more closely reflect what the HRC does, and also make it easier to remember.

Mari Lee said that the HRC is following up on its commitment to go green, and asked all members to respond to the Dropbox email that she recently sent out. Members need to sign up for and start using the HRC's Dropbox account because documents and files will be placed there rather than printed and brought to meetings.

Finally, Mari Lee presented a PowerPoint prepared by Adam Book that reviewed the results of more than 150 surveys that were completed by members of the community. The surveys asked which topics and issues people wanted the HRC to focus on.

XIII. The meeting was adjourned.